

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE BILL ANALYSIS

AMENDMENT DATE: June 30, 2008
POSITION: Oppose

BILL NUMBER: SB 899
AUTHOR: J. Simitian

BILL SUMMARY: Fishing Gear

Existing law authorizes the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to conduct various fishing programs and authorizes the Fish and Game Commission (Commission) to regulate both commercial and recreational fishing activities. This bill would require the DFG to implement a comprehensive abandoned fishing gear data collection, monitoring, and removal program.

FISCAL SUMMARY

The bill requires the DFG to recommend a sustainable funding source to the Commission for the fishing gear program. The non-dedicated Fish and Game Preservation Fund (FGPF) appears to be the most appropriate source because it is funded by fishing license fees. According to the DFG, it would cost \$3 - \$5 million to purchase several specialized boats as well as \$800,000 for staffing and operating expenses to investigate reports of abandoned fishing gear and retrieve the gear. There would also be costs associated with program development. We note that the FGPF is expected to have a \$4.5 million operating deficit in 2008-09 with a year-end balance of about \$10 million. To the extent that the FGPF is unable to support the new program, the bill would result in a fee increase or a General Fund pressure. The bill would only require the DFG to implement the program to the extent funding is made available for that purpose.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This bill has been completely revised since our analysis of the March 26, 2007 version.

COMMENTS

The Department of Finance is opposed to this bill because it would result in substantial costs to the FGPF or General Fund and it is unnecessary because the University of California, Davis already has the SeaDoc program, which has the removal of abandoned fishing gear as one of its objectives. This program works in partnership with the Ocean Protection Council (OPC), State Coastal Conservancy, and other state and federal agencies.

Abandoned fishing gear can impact marine habitats, kill or injure marine life, and can be dangerous to boaters and divers. This bill would require the DFG to develop and implement an abandoned fishing gear program. The DFG would be required to include a phone number and Internet web site on all fishing licenses and appropriate brochures that individuals could use to report abandoned fishing gear. Individuals who lose fishing gear would be required to submit a report to the DFG. Additionally, certain types of commercial fishing gear would be required to be coded by July 1, 2011 to aid in the identification of the source of the abandoned fishing gear. The DFG would be authorized to charge fees and penalties on individuals who chronically lose fishing gear or fail to report the loss of fishing gear to defray the costs of the program. By January 1, 2012 and annually thereafter, the DFG would be required to meet targets set by the OPC for the removal and disposal of abandoned fishing gear. The DFG would be required to set the targets if the OPC has not established them by that time.

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Analyst/Principal (0634) M. Almy	Date	Program Budget Manager Karen Finn	Date
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Department Deputy Director	Date
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Governor's Office:	By:	Date:	Position Approved _____
			Position Disapproved _____

BILL ANALYSIS	Form DF-43 (Rev 03/95 Buff)
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**BILL ANALYSIS/ENROLLED BILL REPORT--(2)
AUTHOR AMENDMENT DATE**

Form DF-43
BILL NUMBER

J. Simitian

June 30, 2008

SB 899

		SO	(Fiscal Impact by Fiscal Year)							
Code/Department		LA	(Dollars in Thousands)							
Agency or Revenue		CO								
Type		RV	PROP						Fund	
			98	FC	2008-2009	FC	2009-2010	FC	2010-2011	Code
3600/Dept FishGam		SO	No	C	\$5,400	C	\$800	C	\$800	0200
<u>Fund Code</u>	<u>Title</u>									
0200	Fish and Game Preservation Fund									